

Message Text

SECRET

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15

ACTION OES-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 IO-13 ISO-00 FEA-01 ACDA-07

CIAE-00 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 EB-07 NRC-05

DODE-00 ERDA-05 ERDE-00 PM-04 SP-02 SS-15 H-02 SAJ-01

SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 /103 W
----- 093256

O R 300740Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8059

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USMISSION IAEA VIENNA

S E C R E T CANBERRA 3178

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TECH, ENRG, AS

SUBJECT: MNC DISCUSSIONS

REF: A) STATE 097500; B) CANBERRA 3160

1. ACTING DCM CALLED TO DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
LATE APRIL 30 BY DEP SEC ROWLAND WHO REQUESTED
USG WITHDRAW FOR PRESENT THE REQUEST FOR MNC
DISCUSSIONS REFERRED TO IN CANBERRA 3160.
GOA REQUEST MADE WITH REGRET, BUT NECESSITATED
BY POSITION IN WHICH GOA PLACED DOMESTICALLY BY
REPORT IN APRIL 30 AUSTRALIAN PRESS OF JAPANESE
DELEGATION TO WESTERN AUSTRALIA REFERRED TO IN PARA 4
CANBERRA 3160. UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES EMBASSY
AGREED TO WITHDRAW FOR THE PRESENT THE USG
REQUEST.

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2. BACKGROUND OF THIS IS THAT FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

IS DEEPLY EMBARRASSED BY PROJECTED JAPANESE DELEGATION TO WESTERN AUSTRALIAN STATE GOVERNMENT. DFA IS UNDER INSTRUCTIONS FROM PRIME MINISTER TO ISSUE PRESS BRIEFING EVENING APRIL 30 IN WHICH IT WILL SAY "THERE HAD BEEN NO APPROACH TO ANY MINISTER OR OFFICIAL OF THE GOVERNMENT OF AUSTRALIA IN RELATION TO THE MATTERS REFERRED TO IN THE 'JAPANESE NUCLEAR RE-CYCLING' STORY WHICH APPEARED IN THE AUSTRALIAN TODAY."

3. IN ADDITION THE GOA UNDER MINISTERIAL INSTRUCTION WISHES TO BE ABLE TO SAY IN RESPONSE TO ANTICIPATED PRESS QUESTIONS THAT NO PROPOSALS FOR ANY DISCUSSION OF NUCLEAR RE-CYCLING OR RELATED MATTERS ARE NOW BEFORE THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT.

4. WE POINTED OUT THAT WHILE OUR WITHDRAWAL AS REQUESTED OF THE USG REQUEST FOR MNC DISCUSSIONS WOULD MEET THE OBJECTIVE IN THE PREVIOUS PARAGRAPH, IT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE FOR THE GOA TO STATE UNDER QUESTIONING THAT NO REQUEST FOR SUCH DISCUSSIONS HAD EVERN BEEN RECEIVED FROM ANY SOURCE. WE ALSO OBSERVED THAT WHILE THE EMBASSY AND USG WOULD OBVIOUSLY SO THEIR UTMOST TO AVOID ANY PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE MATTER, WE COULD NOT IN PRINCIPLE MAKE ANY COMMITMENT TO DENY THAT THE USG HAD EVERN MADE SUCH A REQUEST TO THE GOA. ROWLAND READILLY AGREED ON BOTH OF THESE POINTS AND STATED THAT FOR ITS PART, IF PRESSED, THE GOA WOULD CONFINE ANY RESPONSES TO INDICATING THAT IT HAD HAD VARIOUS DISCUSSION AND PROPOSALS FOR DISCUSSIONS ON THE VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THE PROBLEM OF AVOIDING PROLIFERATION AND STRENGTHENING SAFEGUARDS.

5. EMBASSY COMMENT: WHILE THE FUTURE COURSE OF THIS MATTER IN AUSTRALIA WILL DEPEND UPON DEVELOPMENTS OVER COMING DAYS, IT IS ENTIRELY CONCEIVABLE THAT IF THE JAPANESE STORY TOUCHES OFF WIDESPREAD PUBLIC CONTROVERSY, THE GOA MAY DECIDE IT HAS NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO POSTPONE ANY DISCUSSIONS OF THE TYPE CON-
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TEMPLATED IN STATE 097500 UNTIL AFTER, AND POSSIBLY LONG AFTER, THE COMPLETION OF THE RANGER INQUIRY AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE GOA POSITION THEREON. THE RANGER INQUIRY IS AT BEST NOT SCHEDULED TO BE COMPLETED UNVIL JUNE 30 AND FOR THIS REASON THE GOA MIGHT NOT WISH TO HAVE THIS MATTER REOPENED UNTIL WELL AFTER THAT DATE.

6. WE AGREED WITH ROWLAND TO KEEP IN TOUCH INFORMALLY DURING THE NEXT FEW DAYS AND WILL REPORT PROMPTLY ANY CLARIFYING DEVELOPMENTS IN THE MATTER. MEANWHILE THE USG REQUEST REPORTED IN CANBERRA 3160 SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS WITHDRAWN AND NOT BEFORE THE GOA.

7. EMBASSY IS FORWARDING DETAILS OF APRIL 30 NEWS STORY ON JAPANESE WEST AUSTRALIAN MATTER SEPTTEL. HARGROVE

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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